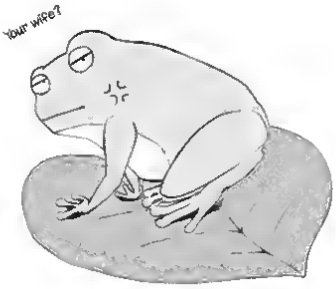

Your wife?

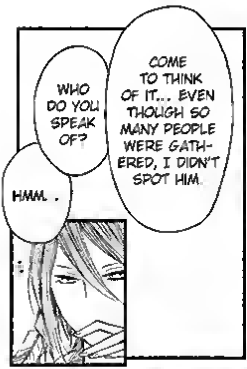
Chapter 2

"Become my wife."
Uuuu!

BLUSH
Your wife?!
UMM... UHH...
YOUR CHEEKS ARE FLUSHED AS RED AS A PEACH
IS THIS, PERCHANCE, YOUR FIRST TIME BEING WOOED BY A MAN?
UMM...
NOBUNAGA-SAMA, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM TEASING MY LITTLE SISTER SO.
MITSUHIDE DONO

VERY WELL THEN. YOU ARE AGUEST YOU MAY FROM SAKA- SPEND YOUR MOTO.
DAYS IN MY CASTLE AT EASE.
RUN, LET'S GO.
UNDER- STOOD
HIDEYOSHI, YOU ARE TO COME AS WELL
HUH? BUT I HAVE YET TO EXPRESS MY HOT FEEL- INGS OF LOVE TO THE PRIN- CESS!
ANOTHER TIME KIKYOU WON'T RUN AWAY
I WILL EXCUSE MYSELF AS WELL.
IF YOU EVER FEEL LIKE IT, COME VISIT, KIKYOU
Nobunaga- sama...
Hime-san~
Phew.
DON'T TELL ME YOU TOOK HIS WORDS SERI- OUSLY?
MITSU... NII-SAMA!
SURELY, HE WAS JOKING WHEN HE SAID HE'D TAKE YOU AS HIS WIFE.

I must think of a good response..
Toking of course
However theres no guarantee that another such situation wont occur again


COME TO THINK OF IT... EVEN THOUGH SO MANY PEOPLE WERE GATHERED, I DIDN'T SPOT HIM.
WHO DO YOU SPEAK OF?
HMM.

T-THAT'S—
I WONDER...

GOODNESS...
IT SEEMS YOU ARE QUITE ESTRANGED FROM THE SUBTLETIES OF LOVE

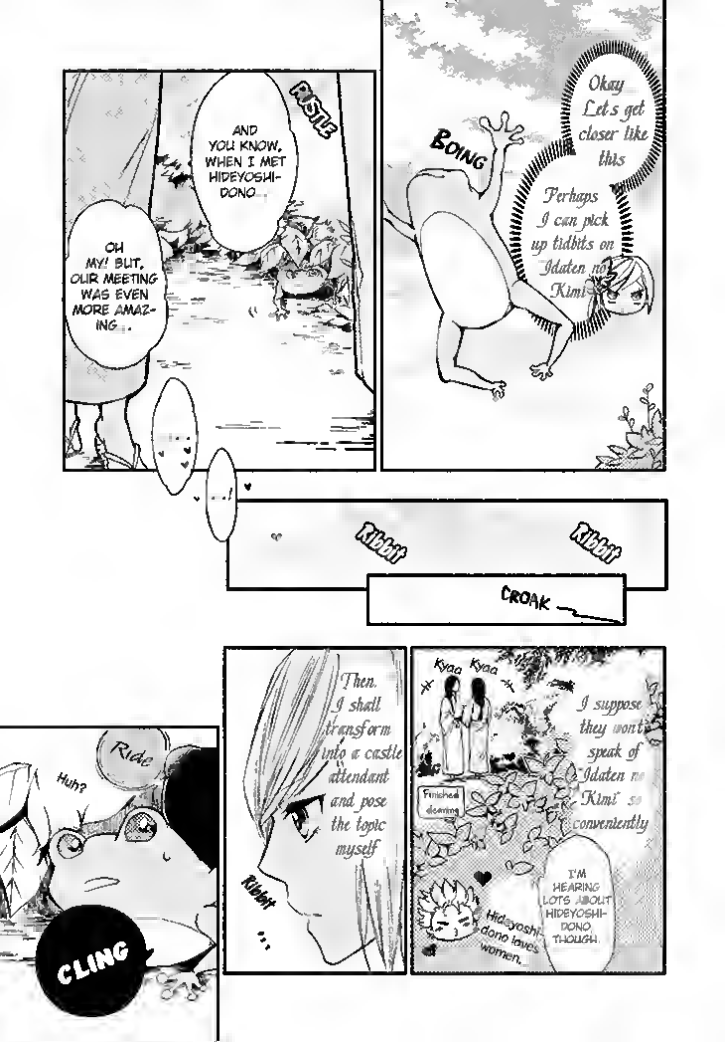
I HAVE THOUGHT OF A JOB FOR YOU.

IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, "IDATEN" IS THE NAME OF A GOD WHO CAN RUN SWIFTLY
IDATEN NO KIMI?
THAT'S A NICKNAME GIVEN TO HIM BY THE CASTLE ATTENDANTS.
"IDATEN NO KIMI."

FIGURE OUT WHO "IDATEN NO KIMI" IS AND GREET HIM.
NATURALLY, I WILL NOT BE LENDING A HAND.
UNDER-STOOD...
For him to go and assign this as a mis-sion
This "Idaten no Kimi" must be a very diffi-cult person...
ALSO, I WOULD LIKE YOU TO SPEAK WITH THE OTHER COMMANDERS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
IF YOU ARE ABLE TO FORM RAPPORT WITH "IDATEN NO KIMI," IT WILL BE EASY TO OB-TAIN INFORMA-TION ON NOBU-NAGA-SAMA.
YOU'LL BE ABLE TOMOVE ADVANTA-GEOUSLY.

First, I must gather information!
Azuchi Castle - Garden
THIS IS TRULY AN IMPRESSIVE GARDEN.
THE CASTLE ATTENDANTS...
'Yūten no Kimi' is a nickname given to him by the castle attendants.
SLIDE
If I transform I'll be able to get closer to hear what they're saying

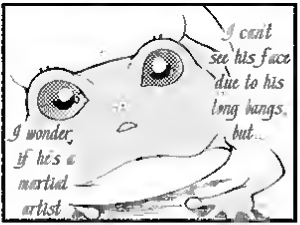
SHINE
Poof


Okay Let's get closer like this
Perhaps I can pick up tidbits on Jidaten no Kimi
BOING
RUSTLE
AND YOU KNOW, WHEN I MET HIDEYOSHI-DONO...
OH MY! BUT, OUR MEETING WAS EVEN MORE AMAZ-ING...
...!
RIBBIT
RIBBIT
CROAK
Then. I shall transform into a castle attendant and pose the topic myself
RIBBIT...
Kyaa Kyaa
I suppose they won't speak of Jidaten no Kimi so conveniently
Finished cleaning
I'M HEARING LOTS ABOUT HIDEYOSHI-DONO THOUGH.
Hideyoshi-dono loves women.
Ride
Huh?
CLING

croak
GIZ
AHHH!
○×▼¥■□◇
!?
That's certainly true in this situation...!
You are quite estranged from the subtleties of love.
C-could this be the frog that I released This yesterday?! position. That cry just now was a mating call?!
I want to undo my transformation, but not here
RUSTLE
WOW, WHAT CUTE FROGGIES!

YOU MUST GET ALONG VERY WELL...
TO STICK TOGETHER SO CLOSELY.

BOING
I SEEM TO HAVE FRIGHTENED THEM...
I'm sorry!


I can't see his face due to his long bangs, but...
I wonder, if he's a martial artist

I'm saved!

REIGH
OH, BUT THIS FROGGY ISN'T RUNNING.

ARE YOU PERHAPS A MATING PAIR?
HERE
N-no! We're not!
!
GEKI

MY, I THOUGHT I HEARD A VOICE FROM OVER HERE..
JOLT
...?
IF ONLY I COULD BE LIKE YOU AND STOP RUNN—
SCAMP
NOT WHEN IT'S SO BRIGHT OUT...
COULD IT BE AN INTRUDER?
FWOOSH
KYAAA!
PAR—
Rustle
Rustle
He's sweating profusely What's wrong with him...
BUT, I HEARD A NINJA WAS CAPTURED THE OTHER DAY—
A NINJA WAS...?

WHOOSH
PARDON ME!!!
AS EXPECTED, HE WAS SO FAST I COULDN'T EVEN FOLLOW HIM WITH MY EYES...
OH, SO IT WAS IDATEN NO KIMI!
AND THERE HE GOES...
Ieyasu Tokugawa Ieyasu-dono
I believe he is the feudal lord of Mikawa and sworn friend of Nobunaga-sama
RUSTLE
GOODNESS, THAT IEYASU-SAMA... I WONDER WHAT HE WAS DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS
WHO KNOWS?
!
I heard that he, like me, is staying at Azuchi as a guest...

So Ieyasu-dono is "Idaten no Kimi"!
Secret Residence
Good night.
It seems Ieyasu-dono interacts with small animals in a very gentle manner
He's quite different from the difficult person I had imagined
He seemed rather frightened when the castle attendants approached him
I wonder if that's related to the reason why Mitsuhide-dono assigned this as a mission

CHIRP
CHIRP
Hmm?
TO REACH IEYASU-DONO'S RESIDENCE, I TURN RIGHT ON THIS PATH AND
I SHOULD'VE ASKED ITO-SAN TO GUIDE ME..
I would be happy to guide you there..
Just the directions are fine!
What should I do? If I transform into a bird, I can fly...
HIME-SAMA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?

Smile
RANMARU-DONO!
HIS EYES WERE STERN YES-TERDAY IS HE BEING TOO CAUTIOUS OF ME?
?
BUT, I GOT LOST..
ACTUALLY, I WAS ON MY WAY TO GREET IEYA-SU-DONO AT HIS RESI-DENCE...
THEN, I SHALL ESCORT YOU
THAT WOULD BE A GREAT HELP.
THIS IS PART OF MY JOB
Ranmaru dono is also someone who's close to Nobu-naga-sama
It may impede my mission if he's so wary of me
If I can deepen my relationship with him and ease his wari-ness

Forget about easing his wariness
Sulk
THE WEATHER IS SPLENDID TODAY, ISN'T IT?
YES.
THE WIND IS PLEASANT TOO.
YES.
THE SUN IS SHINING SO WONDERFULLY THAT EVEN I FEEL BRIGHTER.
YES, IT IS.
Step
Step
OH, NO.
?
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
He leaves no openings to try to connect with him...
THIS IS IEYASU-SAMA'S RESIDENCE.
WELL THEN, EXCUSE ME.
I AM MERELY DOING MY JOB.
Well then...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

N-NOBUNAGA-SAMA
Ba-thump
I'm still a little nervous from what happened yesterday
Blush
GOOD GRIEF, HE SHOULD ENJOY HIMSELF A LITTLE MORE
Sigh
WHOOSH
Deep breathing
Inhale
Exhale
YOU SAW?
A PAIR OF BLOOMING ADOLESCENTS TOGETHER, BOTH STIFFER THAN THE OTHER.
PERHAPS YOU AND RAN ARE SOMEWHAT SIMILAR
HUH?
WHY DON'T YOU RELAX A LITTLE.
...?

IEYASU DIDN'T GREET YOU? I TOLD HIM TO DO SO, THOUGH.
SINCE WE'RE BOTH GUESTS HERE, I THOUGHT I SHOULD GREET HIM.
SO, WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THIS RESIDENCE?
Discipline him? What exactly is Nobunaga-sama planning to do—
HMM?
IEYASU, THAT WHELP— I BET HE SAW A WOMAN'S FACE AND RAN AWAY AGAIN.
BAM
I SHALL DISCIPLINE HIM.
WHAT?!
NOBU-NAGA-SAMA! PLEASE WAIT!

KIKYOU, HIDE BEHIND ME.
ALL RIGHT...?
IEYASU, I'M COMING IN.
HUH?
NOBUNAGA-DONO, YOU WERE HERE?!
PLEASE EXCUSE ME, I'M COMING OVER NOW..
Slide
PUSH
HUH?
...?
I'm going to hit him!
AHH!
THUD
PLEASE PARDON ME! ARE YOU HURT?

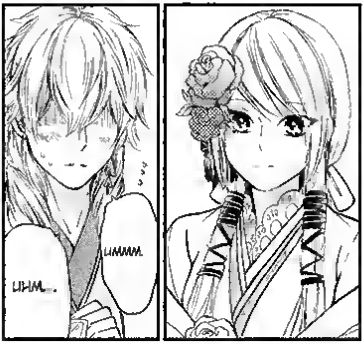
AHHH!
Pale
In
FLOMP
IEYASU-DONO?
THERE'S NO HELP-ING IT
Could he have lost consciousness? I'm sure I was careful when I bumped into him...
LUMP
HEY, IEYASU! HURRY UP AND MOVE!
NOBUNAGA-SAMA, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ALL OF A SUDDEN?!
IF I LEAVE HIM LIKE THAT, YOU'LL BE CRUSHED, KIKYOU
W-WELL, I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR CONCERN, BUT—
SMACK!

SOMETHING RELATED TO WOMEN
HE'S HAD AN UNFORTUNATE EXPERIENCE IN THE PAST
YOU MAY HAVE ALREADY HEARD, BUT IEYASU IS INEPT AT DEALING WITH WOMEN
THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE AWAKE, IEYASU-DONO
HE'S AWAKENED
Something so terrible that it causes him to lose consciousness
UNNGH?
OH... I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS?
HUH?!
Such a noble visage...
Even so... What smooth skin and long eyelashes he has...
WHY DID MITSUHIDE-DONO BID ME COME HERE?
Even though Ieyasu-dono is rumoured to be bad with women
He's sweating a little now...
Just like back then
Pant...
THANK GOODNESS, IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE'S INJURED

JUMP
THUD
IEYASU-DONO. ARE YOU FEELING UNWELL?
AH, I'M FINE! I-I'VE SHOWN YOU SUCH A SHAMEFUL SIGHT.
SO, I UMM.
IEYA-SU-DONO?
PEEK

HEY, IEYASUS, SHOULD YOU BE STANDING SO FAR AWAY DURING A PROPER CONVERSATION?
SO FAR AWAY
I-IT'S NOT! I KNOW I'M BEING RUDE...
B-BUT... WITH FEMALES I'M...

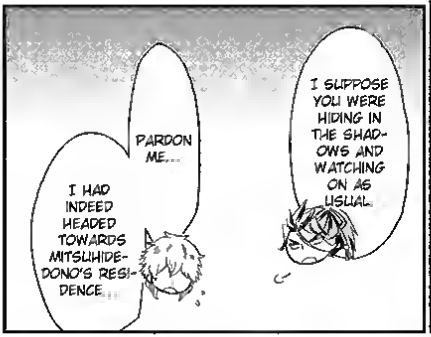
I WON'T ACCEPT EXCUSES. COME HERE AND SIT PROPERLY.
ON THE DOUBLE!
FLAIL
FLAIL
U-UNDERSTOOD!


UMMM.
UHM...

TURN

Sigh...
THIS IS THE FEUDAL LORD OF MIKAWA...
NAMED...
TOKUGAWA. I AM TOKUGAWA IEYASU.
I AM KIKYOU, SISTER OF AKECHI MITSUHIDE
IT IS A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU...
THE CASUALTIES ARE FINALLY DONE WITH YOU SURE TOOK YOUR SWEET TIME.
PING
NOW, THAT'S AN INTERESTING THOUGHT...

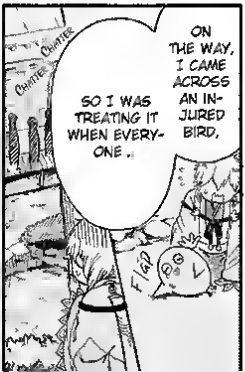
KIKYOU, WOULD YOU HELP THIS SORRY FELLOW CONQUER HIS FEAR WHILST YOU ARE AT AZUCHI?
CON-QUER HIS FEAR...
IN HIS CURRENT STATE, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO TAKE A WIFE
JUST THINK OF IT AS A MATTER TO AMUSE YOURSELF WITH, AND COME SEE HIM SOME-TIMES
N-NOBUNAGA-DONO, YOU NEED NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THINGS LIKE THA...
Could it be that Mitsuhide-dono sent me to Ieyasu-dono with the same sentiments as Nobunaga-sama...?
AND UMM.. KI-KYOU-DONO IS YOUR PARTNER, IS SHE NOT, NOBUNAGA-DONO?
YOU SAID SO YESTER-DAY
I-IEYASU-DONO!
HA! IT'S A FINE THING TO HAVE MORE RIVALS IN LOVE
NOBU-NAGA-SAMA, PLEASE DON'T TEASE ME SO!
Why are we talking about this?!


PARDON ME...
I HAD INDEED HEADED TOWARDS MITSUHIDE-DONO'S RESIDENCE...
I SUPPOSE YOU WERE HIDING IN THE SHADOWS AND WATCHING ON AS USUAL.

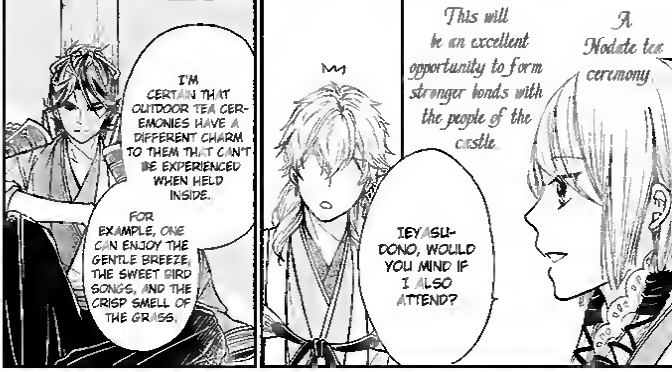
Gulp
SO THAT'S THAT. IEYASU, YOU WERE THERE YESTERDAY?

Yet he still attempted to come out to meet me?
Ieyasu-dono is bad with women.

O-OH, NOTHING LIKE THAT...
SUCH KINDNESS, IEYASU-DONO.


ON THE WAY, I CAME ACROSS AN INJURED BIRD.
SO I WAS TREATING IT WHEN EVERYONE...
CHAPTER CHAPTER
FLAP
D.S.L

HIME, YOU ARE THE KIND ONE
DID YOU NOT GO THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF CARRYING THE FROGGY TO THE WATERSIDE?
I WAS DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR CARING NATURE
OR SO, I WISH I COULD ARTICULATE.
DISCOMFORT
He said it in his mind.
THAT'S RIGHT, IEYASU.
WHY DON'T YOU INVITE KIKYOU TO THAT NODATE* TEA CEREMONY?
*T/N TYPE OF TEA CEREMONY PERFORMED OUTSIDE IN THE OPEN AIR.
IN THE NEAR FUTURE... A TEA ROOM WILL BE PREPARED IN THE RESIDENCE GARDEN FOR NOBUNAGA-DONO'S PLEASURE...
OH, I SEE. WHAT AN ELEGANT SIGHT IT MUST BE.
UM, NO WELL...
HUH?!
"THAT NODATE TEA CEREMONY?" WHAT DO YOU SPEAK OF?
UMM... UH, THAT'S...


I'M CERTAIN THAT OUTDOOR TEA CEREMONIES HAVE A DIFFERENT CHARM TO THEM THAT CAN'T BE EXPERIENCED WHEN HELD INSIDE.
FOR EXAMPLE, ONE CAN ENJOY THE GENTLE BREEZE, THE SWEET BIRD SONGS, AND THE CRISP SMELL OF THE GRASS.
IEYASU-DONO, WOULD YOU MIND IF I ALSO ATTEND?
This will be an excellent opportunity to form stronger bonds with the people of the castle
A Hodate tea ceremony

Y-YES, PRECISELY!
LIGHTS UP
Oh...
His face brightened up...

UMM... IF YOU SHOULD SO WISH, PLEASE ACCOMPANY MITSUHIDE-DONO AND COME TO THE NODATE
I WILL ELABORATE FURTHER IN A LETTER...
PLEASE... THEN, I SHALL IMPOSE UPON YOUR KINDNESS AND ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION.
I-I MUST TRY MY BEST...
IS THIS NOT WONDERFUL, IEYASU?
IT SEEMS YOU ARE ABLE TO CONVERSE WITH KIKYOU
WHOOSH
STARE
Irk
GOOD GRIEF...
HEY, IEYASU,
YOU OUGHT TO LOOK KIKYOU IN THE EYE AT LEAST ONCE.
SHOVE
HUH...

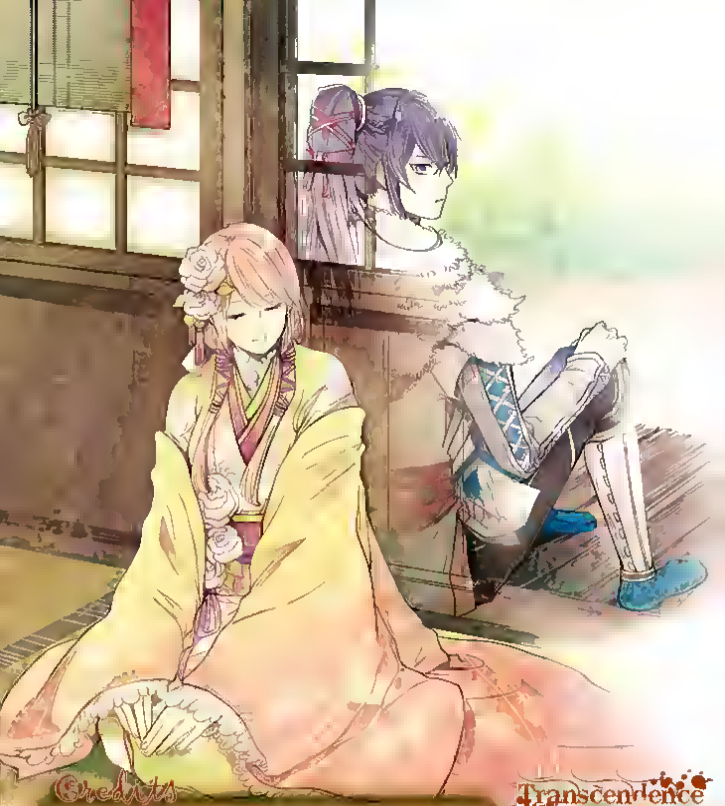
Good grief
Step
Step
IEYASU-DONO!!!
Ahhh!
IE-

FSHHH
THE WIND? NO...
Oh, isn't that Dumpling?
Come to think of it...
But I heard a ninja was captured the other day...
Are there other ninjas lurking here...?
I HEARD YOU WERE RATHER SKILLED SO I CAME OVER TO WATCH.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
.....
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
THAT'S...

WHAT? DID YOU FIND SOMETHING INTERESTING?
NO.
JUST A NAIVE BRAT.

天の華

Mmph!
Mmph!
Returned to them.



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